

(Rept. No. 113-617) on the resolution (H. Res. 748) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5682) to approve the Keystone XL pipeline, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

#### NDAA/MEPS ACT

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today Congress returns to session with little time to complete business on a range of important matters, which is why I am calling on the Senate to take swift action on the National Defense Authorization Act.

The NDAA, which passed the House in May, authorizes policy for the Pentagon, and this year included reforms to ensure our troops are more adequately trained and equipped, both mentally and physically.

A recent Army study found that nearly half the soldiers who reported suicide attempts indicated their first attempt was prior to enlistment. And I am proud to say the House version of the NDAA includes provisions identical to the Medical Evaluation Parity for Servicemembers Act, or MEPS Act, that I introduced earlier in the year. That will help address this challenge.

The MEPS Act enables the Pentagon to establish a baseline to properly track changes in the servicemembers' behavioral health by instituting a requirement that all incoming troops undergo a mental health assessment upon enlistment.

It is time for the Senate to act on this bipartisan legislation that has the support of over 40 veterans' and military advocacy groups.

#### SIGMA GAMMA RHO FOUNDERS DAY

(Ms. KELLY of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my sorority, Sigma Gamma Rho, which today proudly celebrates 92 years of service.

Established in 1922 at Butler University, Sigma Gamma Rho engrained in me and countless women the value of public service. Sisters include former Congresswoman Lindy Boggs, the first woman to represent Louisiana; my colleague, the Honorable Congresswoman CORRINE BROWN of Florida; Hattie McDaniel, the first African American woman to receive an Academy Award; and our Grand Basileus, Bonitta Her-ring.

Sigma Gamma Rho played an integral role in the civil rights movement, as members fought to overturn Jim Crow laws and advance women's equality.

Today Sigma Gamma Rho continues their service in promoting education and awareness in communities on issues like health equality and financial literacy.

For 92 years, Sigma Gamma Rho has been on the front lines of making our Nation better through scholarship, sisterhood, and service. I am honored to be a part of this legacy and wish many more years of success to my sisters in Sigma Gamma Rho.

#### STUNNING CONTEMPT FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Mr. ROTHFUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, everyone remembers the promise the President made while promoting his health care law: "If you like your health care plan, you can keep it." He broke his promise.

We just learned that one of the law's chief architects, Professor Jon Gruber, has come clean and admitted the deceit used to get the law passed. But Professor Gruber also revealed a stunning contempt for the American people. He called us stupid.

This reminds me of when Lucy was trying to get Charlie Brown to kick the football. Charlie says to Lucy, "I don't mind your dishonesty half as much as I mind your opinion of me."

In this case, Mr. Speaker, the American people mind both the administration's dishonesty and its opinion of them.

The professor now regrets his comments. But does he regret that my constituents, Don and Karen of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, and millions of other Americans have lost their health care plan because of ObamaCare? Does he regret that steelworkers in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, and countless others are seeing their health insurance premiums skyrocket?

More importantly, Mr. Speaker, does the President regret it?

#### IN HONOR OF VETERANS DAY

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary service and selfless sacrifice of our Nation's veterans.

Each year, on the 11th day of the 11th month, we pause to pay tribute to our veterans, the men and women who served this country with honor and distinction.

To the almost 22 million veterans in the United States and the 43,000 veterans who live in my congressional district, I am here to say thank you for your service and sacrifice. You answered the call of service and never wavered.

Whether at home or abroad, whether at war or at times of peace, you kept our Nation safe and protected our freedoms. In gratitude and humility, it is now our turn to serve you, providing the benefits and the resources you deserve and earned.

#### RUSSIA INVADES UKRAINE

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, today, NATO's Commander Breedlove said in Bulgaria, "We have seen columns of Russian equipment, primarily Russian tanks, Russian artillery, Russian air defense systems, and Russian combat troops entering into Ukraine." In response, Ukraine has redeployed troops to the east to counter the insurgency. But these soldiers are severely under-supplied.

Ukraine had an election just a couple of weeks ago, the most transparent, the most free, and the most pro-Western election in history. But pro-Russian parliamentarians received less than 10 percent of the vote.

Today, once again, Ukraine faces war, as the ceasefire there collapsed as Russia attempts to reassert its influence by sinister and illegal means.

Ukraine's young soldiers don't have proper boots or weapons or defensive equipment. How many times must Ukraine be invaded before we call it an invasion?

I call upon the House to pass H.R. 5190, the bill I introduced with my fellow Ukrainian Caucus cochair, JIM GERLACH of Pennsylvania, to provide meaningful humanitarian aid and security assistance to Ukraine. The Senate has passed S. 2828 that does much the same.

Let us stop the advance of this tyranny in the new century. Liberty is calling. Let us measure up in this lameduck session.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE HOWARD COBLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, we are here tonight to pay tribute to the dean of the North Carolina delegation and our beloved colleague of many years, HOWARD COBLE.

HOWARD COBLE has been a dedicated public servant to the people of North Carolina and a champion for honest, effective government. For three decades, he has taken great care to represent the values and concerns of Sixth District residents.

□ 1930

It is a profound honor to call HOWARD a dear friend, and it saddens me to

think about coming here in the next Congress without his wisdom or signature wit.

Wearing his trademark plaid jackets, HOWARD has been a champion for his constituents, whether in Washington or back in North Carolina. He never backed down from a challenge to do what was right for North Carolina and always pushed Washington to work better for those he represented.

Always ready with a cheerful greeting and a welcoming smile for whoever crossed his path, it is clear HOWARD cares about the little details that mean so much to average North Carolinians. Those who met him know of his characteristic penchant for inquiring about their alma mater and then rattling off the corresponding mascot.

Perhaps the most fitting summary of HOWARD's personality is that he is the essence of what it means to be a southern gentleman: someone who simply exudes kindness, charm, and compassion. And let's not forget that he was named the sexiest bachelor in Congress by BuzzFeed earlier this year.

HOWARD is also known for his deadpan humor, and loves a good joke, even if it is at his own expense. However, that wit can sometimes be a two-edged sword. In 2008, his sense of humor almost killed someone. At the North Carolina GOP Convention he cracked a joke to ROBERT PITTENGER, who now represents North Carolina's Ninth Congressional District. ROBERT nearly expired after choking on his meal in mid-chuckle. Reliable sources have hinted that the joke might have been a variation of HOWARD's "feisty mountain woman" one-liner that he routinely uses to describe me. Fortunately, former Presidential candidate Governor Mike Huckabee was there to rescue ROBERT from HOWARD's humor with a well-placed Heimlich maneuver.

All kidding aside, HOWARD is a man of integrity and principle, a Representative who has stood for what is right and who has fought on behalf of what makes America a great Nation.

Today, I salute HOWARD COBLE, my friend, for his many years of service. We will miss him greatly.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I now yield to our colleague, Mr. PRICE.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding and for scheduling this Special Order here on our first night back in town for the very important purpose of paying tribute to our dear friend and colleague, HOWARD COBLE. I am very happy to join in this, as many other colleagues will be tonight as well.

I have served with HOWARD since I first arrived here in 1987. He had beaten me by 2 years. He was first elected in 1984 to represent North Carolina's Sixth District.

I think when you hear the tributes tonight from both sides of the aisle you are going to, quite accurately, conclude that HOWARD COBLE is one of the best-liked Members of this body, and that affection extends across the entire political spectrum.

HOWARD is always ready with a kind word for everyone, from fellow Representatives to Capitol Police and constituents. It is difficult to walk anywhere with HOWARD in Washington, D.C., or in North Carolina without being stopped several times because he has so many friends who just want to catch up with him.

I have always especially enjoyed introducing my staff to HOWARD. His first question usually is: "What high school did you go to?" And then the second question is something like: "What's it like working for this scallywag?"

We've sometimes disagreed, of course, on politics and policy, but we have had many, many occasions for fruitful collaboration and cooperation on issues important to North Carolina. We have worked for years, for example, on promoting textile research. We have certainly worked on disaster relief after several major hurricanes. Over the years, I have come to appreciate HOWARD as a smart and able legislator, and, more than that, I have come to value him as a person and to value his friendship.

My district staff would want me to add how much we all admire HOWARD's constituent service. When it comes to working with our constituents in dealing with Federal agencies, party lines don't matter. Often, the district lines are a little indistinct and we have to figure out whose district someone is in or get a case referred back and forth. HOWARD's staff is invariably cooperative and competent. It is not an accident that he has a superb reputation in North Carolina for the best constituent service around.

HOWARD has been a dedicated Member in this body in Washington as well. He has been an effective legislator, especially distinguishing himself in his leadership positions on the Judiciary Committee. He has done all this with a certain grace and style. He reminds us of a time when our politics were less hard-edged.

So as he retires at the close of the current Congress, we wish him all the best. He leaves this body with immense affection and respect. Our State and the House of Representatives have greatly benefited from the service of HOWARD COBLE.

Godspeed, my friend.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to our colleague, Mr. JONES.

Mr. JONES. I thank Ms. FOXX for putting this together. Tonight is a sad night, but a very special night, I think, for those of us who have had the privilege to know HOWARD COBLE as long as I have. We go back to 1983, when I was a freshman Democrat in the North Carolina House of Representatives and he was a member of the North Carolina House of Representatives as a Republican. Why we met, I don't know, but eventually we became pretty good friends at that point. He then left the North Carolina House and came to Washington, D.C., and my father, Congressman Walter Jones, Sr., was chair-

man of the Merchant Marine Committee. Mr. COBLE, who came from North Carolina, was on that committee because he is a former member of the Coast Guard. He was a natural because of the work they did on that committee. My father became a friend of HOWARD COBLE's. Then I came to Washington, Mr. Speaker, as a Republican, and we have been friends for many years.

This man, to me, is very special as a human being. I heard Mr. PRICE say the "dean," but I call him the "leadah", l-e-a-d-a-h. Mr. COBLE likes to tell people that is because those of us from eastern North Carolina don't know the word "leader" ends in e-r instead of a-h. I did that because at the time we became the majority in 1995, it was a change in the House, for sure, and there was a Democrat for a number of years, and Mr. COBLE, being the kind of man he was, said, "No, I don't want to be called the dean. As long as he's here in Congress, I want him to remain the dean." I think that says a heck of a lot about who this person is. So, Mr. Speaker, I decided that he should be known as the "leadah," and therefore many people in the House of Representatives from both parties call him the "leadah"—some with a northern accent, some with a west coast accent, but it still sounds the same.

For me, personally, this night is sad because I have spent many nights in the last few years where Mr. COBLE and I have had dinner together at the Capitol Hill Club reminiscing about yesterday but also thinking about today. For me, this is a personal relationship that is like family, quite frankly. For me to know that I have been reelected for another term and to know that Mr. COBLE will go back home and enjoy the love and affection of the people of Greensboro, it still is sad for me personally. I do think that he has given so much not only to the State of North Carolina, but to our Nation. He has been a very effective leader of the House. He has been a great legislator. He has been able to get things done in the Judiciary Committee and other committees. He will always be remembered in my heart as a member of my family.

To you, HOWARD COBLE, I love you as a brother in Christ. You are a special man who has given so much to not only North Carolina, but to America. You will always remain a member of my family. God bless you, sir.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to our esteemed colleague from eastern North Carolina (Mr. MCINTYRE).

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you, HOWARD, for your spirit, service, and standard of statesmanship.

HOWARD and I have had a spirit of friendship that has been something we have always enjoyed together here on the floor. He has often asked me about what the latest score was or when the next game is that our beloved Tar Heels were playing in any sport—not just football and basketball but baseball and many other sports the team engages in.

But our spirit has gone even beyond that great school spirit and congressional spirit that we share to the spirit we have shared in our Lord and how God has touched our lives, and the fellowship together that we have had right across the hall in the Congressional Prayer Caucus and even on the steps of the Capitol here one evening several years ago. I am sure you remember that we shared that together, HOWARD.

Second is his service. In addition to his spirit of friendship and friendliness to so many people and the spirit that we have shared in our Lord is his longevity of service that he has given. But it hasn't just been mundane or in-and-out service. It has been a service done with life, laughter, and with latitude. He has life in what he does. He always shares a smile and makes you laugh and not take things so seriously that you can't enjoy what you are doing. We all should be able to enjoy this great opportunity of service.

He also takes the latitude to spend time with you and the latitude to literally work across the aisle, as symbolized by the comments you have already heard tonight and the friendships that he has across the aisle.

Third, with that spirit and service is also his standard of statesmanship.

HOWARD, I think about when we flew together with the Commandant of the Coast Guard. You being a Coastie yourself, we often talked about the importance of the Coast Guard and how we know it serves us well in North Carolina and nationwide. We flew down with the Commandant on his plane, and HOWARD came down to my district to honor Wilmington as the Nation's first Coast Guard city on the east coast. We shared that time together.

He was that kind of person that would travel and spend time with you. And whether it was on the coast in Wilmington or whether it was on the pitching mound together, as he and I and Representatives Foxx and PRICE shared at our alma mater, UNC Chapel Hill, just this past spring, he knew always how to show that friendship and to show that standard of statesmanship in every situation.

Thank you, HOWARD, for always bringing people together. With your disarming smile and your friendship you have shown what exemplary statesmanship is all about. You have shown that spirit of fellowship and friendship. You have given that longevity of service. Most of all, you have shown that standard of statesmanship to which we all should ascribe.

God bless you, my friend, my Christian brother, and my fellow Tar Heel. Thank you so much.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the Congresswoman from North Carolina, Congresswoman ELLMERS.

Mrs. ELLMERS. I am honored to stand before you to speak on behalf of my dear friend, the dean of our delegation, HOWARD COBLE. He has been a source of wisdom, an esteemed col-

league, and a loyal friend to all since taking office in 1985.

One of the fondest memories that I have of HOWARD was when I had the privilege of watching him accept the Bertholf Award. This prestigious honor was awarded to HOWARD for his unwavering support of the brave men and women serving in the United States Coast Guard. When I arrived at the ceremony, I wasn't surprised to find the committee room packed from wall to wall. Seating was scarce, and there was hardly any standing room left for supporters. Everyone was there to show support and appreciation for our good friend HOWARD, just as he has been there to show support and appreciation over the years to all of us.

While speaking at the ceremony, Admiral Papp shared some words of advice that HOWARD once gave him:

Always take care of your shipmates.

□ 1945

HOWARD, you have truly embodied this piece of advice through your service in Congress, especially when taking care of your constituents.

You have always taken care of each of us, your shipmates, through both your dedicated service and loyal friendship.

On a personal note, I have had the incredible honor of following HOWARD in representing Moore and Randolph Counties in District Two, and I must say, you are truly loved and respected, and I have very big shoes to continue to fill.

Your retirement marks the end of an era here in Congress, but launches the beginning of another incredible journey for you. I wish you a long and relaxing retirement, and I will be forever grateful for your friendship and guidance through the years.

Thank you.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield to our colleague from North Carolina, RICHARD HUDSON.

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, you may notice my sharp jacket tonight. It is a madras jacket worn in honor of my dear friend and colleague, HOWARD COBLE.

HOWARD was not always known for just his colorful jackets. Back when he first came to town, HOWARD COBLE was known for his many colorful suspenders. In fact, I don't know how many he had, but it was well-known that he would always have those bright, colorful suspenders on.

Next he became known for wearing distinctive hats. In fact, in the nineties, Tim Russert used to refer to HOWARD COBLE as "the man with the hat."

Then it was Tim Russert's son, Luke, who first noticed the madras jackets a few years ago, and he actually put on his Twitter account that the jacket HOWARD COBLE is wearing tonight looked like "an exploding turtle."

So the Russert family has long acknowledged HOWARD's unique sense of style, as have many of his constituents and his friends here in Congress.

HOWARD COBLE has been known for his sense of humor. He once remarked that if he put on a brandnew suit, it would immediately look rumpled like an unmade bed.

HOWARD has always had a self-deprecating humor and a personality that draws people to him. Everyone loves him. I learned that as a candidate for Congress, Mr. Speaker, because I inherited three counties from HOWARD COBLE's former district, so when I would go ask people for votes, I had to immediately tell them I wasn't running against HOWARD COBLE because, otherwise, they didn't want to talk to me.

HOWARD COBLE is legendary in his constituent services. He has always taken care of his constituents. They know they have a friend in their Congressman HOWARD COBLE.

He set a standard, Mr. Speaker, to which we can all aspire to in terms of the integrity with which he has conducted himself, the love for people that everyone knows and can sense and is drawn to, and the constituent service.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a privilege to get to know HOWARD COBLE. It has been an honor to serve with him, and I call him friend. I will miss seeing him in Congress every day, but I know that he will not be a stranger.

I just say, God bless you, HOWARD COBLE, and Godspeed.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield to our distinguished colleague from North Carolina (Mr. PITTENGER).

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Speaker, much has been said and written about the ratings of the United States Congress and the approval of what the American people think of us. It is somewhere right around 10 percent.

Let me tell you those ratings don't take into consideration HOWARD COBLE. My esteemed friend in this Congress is regarded by his own constituents as a family member.

HOWARD COBLE chose not to be married, but what became his family were his constituents. What became his friends were his colleagues in Congress. Both sides of the aisle love HOWARD.

I am one, Congressman COBLE, who loved seeing you out there on that back row every time I walked in, with a big smile and a good story, and everybody would come by and say hello to HOWARD during the course of the session, just to see you, because you are special to all of us.

Yes, my good friend, Congresswoman FOXX, did tell a story about how my life was spared as I was chewing some chicken, and I realized I couldn't chew and laugh at the same time as I tried to swallow that chicken, and then here came Mr. Huckabee to give me the Heimlich and save my life.

Well, you know, I was in a primary a year after that. It was 11 people in the primary, and the one good thing about that is I got a sympathy vote from Mike Huckabee, and he endorsed me, so that was a good thing.

HOWARD, thank you. Thank you for being committed in your job. On the

Judiciary Committee, on the Transportation Committee, you were faithful in every respect, to do the right thing for North Carolina, for your district and, frankly, for the American people.

We are all in debt to you for your service to this great country. Our country is better off today because of the life of HOWARD COBLE.

Thank you. God bless you.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. GOODLATTE. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is just a real honor to be here tonight to tell my friend, HOWARD COBLE, how much he means to me and how much I am going to miss him here in the House of Representatives.

He has not only been an outstanding leader on the House Judiciary Committee—and by the way, I hope the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) will compile all those wonderful photographs and put them in some kind of a binder so that—a book maybe, so that all of us can see and enjoy all those historic caricatures that have been created in HOWARD's honor over these many years—but not only has he been a great member of the House Judiciary Committee, he has been a close personal friend of mine for more than 20 years.

In addition to serving with him on the committee, he is somebody who is always turning to others, taking an interest in them. He has an uncanny ability to remember the mascots for virtually any high school or college that someone attended and his ability to always ask others how they are feeling.

With respect to this last point, he has defused more than a few difficult conversations by asking people, "How is your back feeling?" Inevitably, especially if someone is older, they begin to talk about back problems and forget what they were so exercised about.

He is also a great tennis player. For nearly 20 years, I have had the honor of playing tennis with him very early on Wednesday mornings. HOWARD isn't known for moving around the court really fast, but the thing about him is he always was there where you hit the ball, and he always put it back just exactly where he wanted it to go, an amazing accomplishment. So HOWARD, thank you very much for that.

I want to tell one story in conjunction with a field hearing that took place in Nashville—HOWARD is a great fan of bluegrass music and country music in general—a field hearing that took place in Nashville when the Fairness in Music Licensing bill was under consideration in the late 1990s, a meeting was arranged with Garth Brooks.

HOWARD, who was serving as the then-subcommittee chairman, was a lifelong fan of bluegrass and traditional country music. He didn't really know who Brooks was and was far more interested in arranging a meeting with Grandpa Jones from the Grand Ole

Opry, but he knows who he is now. In fact, Garth is making a comeback; and, HOWARD, you will enjoy many, many more opportunities to enjoy the music that you love.

He would always ask me how things were in the Star City, which is my hometown of Roanoke, Virginia, and took an interest in me and what I was doing.

On the committee, as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet, where he serves now and has served on a number of occasions in the past, he stood very strong for the rights, the private property rights of people who are creators of music and motion pictures and great products that they seek patents on and so on.

His work will serve for a long time in the future to protect that great American incentive to create and create jobs. His work has created many jobs for many Americans.

He is a true son of the Sixth District of North Carolina. I am from the Sixth District of Virginia, but in his case, he is a lifelong son of the Sixth District, having been born in Greensboro, educated in the Sixth District, and been a county attorney and an assistant U.S. attorney. He has been a revenue officer with the North Carolina Department of Revenue.

What I didn't know was that his first 6 years in his professional life, he was a claims adjuster for the State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company. So here, in the closing days of his service, I am still learning new things about my friend, HOWARD COBLE.

HOWARD, thank you very much for not only being my friend and a great colleague to all of us here in the House, but for being a great American. Thank you, and God bless you.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield to our colleague from North Carolina, PATRICK MCHENRY, the chief deputy whip.

Mr. MCHENRY. I thank the secretary of the Republican Conference, my colleague and classmate from North Carolina, VIRGINIA FOXX.

Mr. Speaker, today, I stand in tribute with the fine threads of a man named HOWARD COBLE. Congressman, State representative, Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Revenue, captain of the United States Coast Guard, school bus driver—that is where it all began, in high school. That was his first public service.

JOHN HOWARD COBLE has held a variety of titles during his time and during his years, but to me, he has always been known as the dean, the dean of the North Carolina delegation, which he has been, for the last 15 years, the longest-serving Republican Member of this body in the history of the State of North Carolina, and my friend.

I am here to pay tribute and to thank him for his time in public service. He is what a Member of Congress should be, and that is concerned for his constituents and being their voice here in Washington and having an impact.

You certainly, my dean, have had a huge impact on my life, those that are paying tribute to say thank you tonight, but also your constituents and the American people, and we thank you.

Now, there are a number of stories about the dean, a number of them I would like to tell over the years, and most of them are, in fact, true.

This one story I want to tell tonight—actually, two, if I may. It goes back to the first time HOWARD ran for Congress in 1984. The campaign committee for the Republicans brought up folks in tough, challenging races to have some video and film shot with President Ronald Reagan. He helped with his popularity to help get some folks across the finish line in 1984.

HOWARD was so nervous that he forgot to shake the Gipper's hand, so one of the campaign committee staff, they were coming to Coble's district, and HOWARD said, "Where were you?" And he said, "Well, I was just in Alabama with President Reagan."

"Oh, really?"

He says, "Yeah. I told him I was going to Greensboro, and President Reagan looked at me and said, 'Well, tell that son of a gun that didn't shake my hand I said hello.'"

So HOWARD got a little flustered and was a little embarrassed and everything else until everybody started laughing, but HOWARD has had a great sense of humor, and that shows the real testament to HOWARD's integrity.

The other thing about HOWARD is fiscal conservatism. It goes back to what he said in his first campaign, he is going to bring a sharp pencil to the Washington budget, and he, in fact, has.

In fact, it wasn't very well-appreciated during his early service in Congress. There was a Member of Congress who was furious, who said, "That sharp pencil might actually get your ticket written out of Congress." And HOWARD told him that he thought, "Well, I believe there is life after Congress," and let the guy go on his way.

Well, that guy was not reelected, and HOWARD has been reelected 14 times during his time here, so true proof that fiscal conservatism can still win.

There are a number of other stories that we will talk about over perhaps a drink afterwards, but the one thing is everybody from his district knows and those of us from North Carolina know that he knows every high school mascot in the State of North Carolina.

Every child that I see that comes through Congress is simply amazed that their dean knows where they are from and knows their high school and their high school mascot.

□ 2000

It is because he cares. So we are grateful tonight, and we want to say "thank you" to our friend, our dean, our leader—JOHN HOWARD COBLE.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. I want to thank the secretary of the Republican caucus for granting me the time tonight and to say that I rise as a Member from the loyal opposition, who has great affection, friendship, and admiration for my neighbor in the Rayburn Building.

Mr. Speaker, I would say that Congressman HOWARD COBLE represents the values of gentlemanly behavior, affability, cordiality, some might say—those of us from the North would call it—a bit of a courtly manner, which I always associated with the South. He is not just a man of character, but he is a character, and his personality and demeanor represent the type of collegiality that is so important to bring this institution together. I have no doubt he has well represented the constituents of his North Carolina district these many years—the Sixth District—and they probably share my great affection for this wonderful man.

Now, I say that knowing that we disagree, issue-wise, on almost everything; but I think HOWARD COBLE is the kind of person who represents what Congress should be—individuals who may disagree on issues but who become friends through their years of service. That is really remarkable because many people who go to work every day in this country go to work with people who think just like they do. They are in the same business or they teach a course in something or they are surrounded by those who agree, but what makes HOWARD COBLE special is he can be friends with people who disagree. Now, those who disagree with him even might come from his own party. One comes to mind in particular, someone he has kindly called the “lady of the harbor.” I don’t know if former Congresswoman Helen Bentley is listening tonight or not, but she has a few remembrances of HOWARD as well.

Though we might have disagreed, we became great friends, and it makes the service bearable. It makes it bearable. HOWARD is also my neighbor over in the Rayburn Building, and there isn’t a time that we pass in the hall that he always doesn’t say, “Hey, good morning.” “Hey, good afternoon. How are you doing?” His compassionate nature and his Mr. Cordiality, really, are extraordinary qualities in an institution where people come with very, very strongly held views. So I want to pay tribute to HOWARD COBLE’s service. I didn’t know he was the longest-serving Republican in North Carolina history. He has served honorably, and he has helped this institution to hold together.

Thank you, HOWARD COBLE, for teaching all of us how to behave and how to be effective in our service. May God bless you in the days and years ahead. You know you always have family here. We appreciate your service, and we thank the people of North Carolina for sending you here these many years. Godspeed.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to our distinguished colleague from Texas, Mr. LAMAR SMITH.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that I am absolutely privileged and honored to be here tonight to be able to talk about such a good friend, HOWARD COBLE.

If I were to describe HOWARD in two words—and this is an ultimate compliment in my book—it would be that he is a gentleman and a scholar, and there aren’t too many people who actually succeed in achieving both those kinds of distinctions.

So, HOWARD, it is nice to be with you tonight. You are here in the front row of the House Chamber, and we celebrate your contributions to public service, and we honor you for being the great person that you are.

I have often said—and I have mentioned this to HOWARD COBLE in person—that if there were such a thing as a congressional class president, it would be HOWARD COBLE. Now, we don’t have such a thing as a class president, but if we did, I think HOWARD would be nominated and voted upon and approved by acclamation. He is that popular here. He is that dearly loved and respected by all of us.

I have had the privilege of sitting next to him on the Judiciary Committee for many, many years, and during that time, I have watched HOWARD work; I have watched him speak; and I have watched him think. He has been the chairman of three subcommittees on the Judiciary Committee—first, Crime; second, Administrative Law; and, third, Intellectual Property—that being the most recent subcommittee that he has chaired. He also chaired another subcommittee, early on, on the Transportation Committee, which means that he is probably one of those rare Members of Congress—perhaps even the only one—who has chaired four subcommittees in the House of Representatives.

Throughout all of that time and in all of my years of being with HOWARD, he has exhibited some wonderful attributes, and those qualities are graciousness, smarts, and politeness—again, a rare combination in any individual, but those are the qualities—those are the attributes—that we see in HOWARD on a daily basis.

HOWARD COBLE and I share something else in common, and that is that we often are half of a congressional doubles team that has been playing tennis for years and years and years.

HOWARD, I would like to say that we are the better half, and maybe that is true half the time—I am not sure—or something close to that. There have been a number of Members who have participated in these doubles matches, and two primary Members who are oftentimes on the other side of the net from HOWARD and me are BOB GOODLATTE and FRED UPTON. They have been joined on occasion by SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO and also by KEVIN YODER.

I have to say, HOWARD, I do believe that whoever plays with SHELLEY

MOORE CAPITO probably wins more often than not, or maybe I should say that when Shelley was playing with, say, Bob or Fred that we had our hands full. That is not to say we were always on the losing side. We held our own. It has just been a real pleasure to enjoy those times together with you, and I will say, unequivocally, that I don’t know of anybody else who is a better volleyer than you. If anyone got a tennis ball past you in the last 10 years, I did not see it, so we appreciate your tennis prowess as well.

Lastly, again, we are here tonight just to honor a great man—a gentleman and a scholar—both for his public service, for being an example to all of us in the House, and also, to so many of us, for being just an exceptionally good friend.

HOWARD, thank you for being with us for these wonderful years that you have been in Congress. You have done so much for your constituents and have done so much for us as well—your colleagues and friends in the House. It is a privilege to be here tonight.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentlewoman from Texas, Ms. SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the manager of this Special Order, and it gives me great privilege to be able to stand here today.

Mr. Speaker, as I look at Congressman COBLE, I think of the men and women who love this institution. I love it, and I have had the privilege of serving on the House Judiciary Committee, which I believe is the holder of the Founding Fathers’ dream of democracy for this country. As I have worked with Congressman COBLE, I have seen nothing but his love for the law, for the broad depth of the House Judiciary Committee and, might I say, the power.

Congressman, you have used that power with gentlemanly gentleness and forcefulness in representing your constituents and your philosophy.

We have had some tough battles on the House Judiciary Committee, but I have always seen and known HOWARD COBLE to be a gentleman.

I am reminded of how many days and moments and minutes and months that we have been here in this place, and, HOWARD, I believe that, every time we have seen each other, we have said “hello” with a smile. I thank you for that, and it represents your love of this country and your love of the system of justice and democracy and the respect for difference of opinion.

Let me also say that I have a great Texan as my daughter. She loves Texas, and she is now an elected official, but she went on to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke. She couldn’t leave North Carolina. She knew the bipartisan manner of your work, and as they studied on those two campuses, they knew Congressman HOWARD COBLE.

So let me say to you, on behalf of those of us who have worked with you

over the years—Democrats and Republicans—and in the time that I have had the privilege of serving in this House, what a mighty “thank you” we want to give you and to recognize the service you have given to the Nation, to your constituents and, certainly, the teaching that you have given to all of us. Well done, my good friend. We will miss you, and we wish for you a long life and an enjoyable time in continuing to serve in your own way the United States of America. Thank you so very much. We love you, HOWARD.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to our distinguished colleague from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING).

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak for a few minutes about some of the many remarkable qualities that my friend—the leader of the North Carolina delegation, Congressman HOWARD COBLE—has exemplified throughout his nearly 30 years of service to the Sixth District of North Carolina and its people.

To earn the continuous confidence of your constituents for three decades, Mr. Speaker, is a tremendous honor, and it is one that HOWARD COBLE has unfailingly performed with remarkable humility, never taking it for granted that he would be reelected.

To also earn the respect and devotion of your staff, Members of this House on both sides of the aisle—certainly as we have seen tonight—and of the many stakeholders whom he has worked with on a daily basis throughout his career as a legislator is a testament to HOWARD’s commitment to public service, and more importantly, Mr. Speaker, it is a testament to his personal character and charm.

Many of the laws HOWARD COBLE has authored have been in politically and technically complex areas—copyright, patent and trademark. These agreements can be very difficult to negotiate when it is vitally important to the public and the American economy that we get it right. HOWARD COBLE has gotten it right. He has protected the rights of individual authors and inventors just as the drafters of the Constitution intended them to be. HOWARD’s skills and his unblemished reputation for fair dealing among all parties have been critical to the congressional efforts over the many years to forge consensus in these difficult areas.

HOWARD’s commitment to public service, as we have heard tonight from the other speakers, began long before 1984 when he was elected to Congress. It is a commitment to public service that spans over 50 years. Throughout his life, he has performed these duties with a sense of grace, compassion, and respect—respect for people, respect for his colleagues, respect for the process, respect for the institutions of government—as have all been echoed here tonight.

I have talked to a number of Congressman COBLE’s staff to hear reflections that they have had, and a number of them have recalled some poignant moments:

One recalled the valuable lessons that HOWARD has taught him. One of the longest-serving staff members told me how impressed he was to learn why HOWARD went back to his district regularly to meet with constituents—constituents who were unlikely to support him. He didn’t only meet with his supporters but with the folks who didn’t support him. HOWARD explained that the congressional seat he was in didn’t belong to him but that it was their seat and that all of his constituents needed to know that they have a Congressman who cares about them, who thinks about them, and who represents them in Washington—even if they decide never to vote for him that he will represent them;

Another staff member echoed the sentiment, recalling how refreshing it was to work for a Member who was always able to stay true to his ideas, describing HOWARD as someone who appreciates real people;

Another staff member remarked that she was so impressed at how other Members responded to him. She recalled that at the beginning of a Judiciary Committee markup right before HOWARD’s father passed away that Chairman Hyde started off with a moment of silence and that, after that moment of silence, the first two Members to come up to HOWARD and express sorrow for his loss were Representative Watt and Representative Delahunt—two colleagues who crossed the aisle to console and share a moment with their friend who was mourning a loss.

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Witnessing that moment made this young staffer proud to work for HOWARD. It taught her a lot about the importance of treating people in a humane fashion. And, indeed, HOWARD treats everyone humanely, whether it is in a meeting with constituents, a meeting with high-level officials, a meeting with celebrities, or meeting with staff members after a long day, having them come over to his office where they share a laugh for a few moments, calling staff members after a long markup and telling them that he really appreciated the work they did today.

In an interview, Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago, HOWARD stated: “I’ve been richly blessed with good friends up here and also back home. And I will continue to embrace those friends, even though I’m leaving.”

Well, Mr. Speaker, it is us who have been richly blessed by HOWARD. And we will continue to embrace our good friend HOWARD because he is a friend and a mentor to us all forever.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I want to give our colleague from North Carolina a moment to respond if he wishes to make any comments about the comments that we have made about him. I am not sure that I want to just yield him such time as he may consume, but my hope is that if he wishes to respond, he will take the opportunity to do so.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, as many of my colleagues know, my middle name is Brevity. If it can be said in 5 minutes, don’t take 25 minutes to say it.

You all surely do know how to make an old man feel good, and I thank you for this. You have embellished many areas of my life which I have embraced as well.

But I must correct what PATRICK MCHENRY said. I do not know every mascot in North Carolina. I think Virginia has given me credit for that too.

Thanks to all of you who have taken part in this Special Order. You have made me feel very special, and for that, I thank you.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all of my colleagues who have come down tonight. I did not thank them on an individual basis because I wanted to save as much time as possible for people to make the comments that they have made.

I think the fact that we have had such a bipartisan presentation here tonight supports the comments that have been made tonight. The comments that have been made, notwithstanding what our colleague said, have been extremely eloquent, and I want to thank everybody for coming down.

I want you to know that we did our best to have this event earlier this year, but we could not get on Mr. COBLE’s schedule because there were so many parties going on on his behalf that we had an awful time finding a night to do it.

I don’t know anybody who has more people paying him tribute than our friend HOWARD Coble. We are going to miss him tremendously and his North Carolina values of hard work, common sense, and sacrifice on behalf of those he has served.

It has been a personal joy for me to work alongside HOWARD Coble in the Congress for the last 10 years, and it really is hard to imagine how we will go on without him.

His friendship and leadership on our State delegation will be dearly missed in the coming years. But his legacy of service and devotion to our home State and all North Carolinians will continue to be a standard for current and future leaders to follow. He will always be our dean. He will always be our “leadah.”

And, Mr. Speaker, with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### OBAMACARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to also express my love and appreciation for HOWARD COBLE. There is not a more honorable, noble, humble, able man in all of Congress, and it has been a great opportunity and a great blessing to me in my life to be a friend of HOWARD COBLE and to pray with